Food Policy

Reviewed by	
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Our school vision.

Hethersett VC Primary School empowers its children and their families to flourish and grow. Creativity, compassion, responsibility, the love of learning to gain knowledge and wisdom, combined with Christian values shape our inclusive education.
Together we are stronger, respecting ourselves and others to create a successful and healthy future.
Keep your roots deep in him, build your lives on him, and become stronger in your faith, as you were taught. And be filled with thanksgiving. Colossians 2:7

1. Policy Source

Hethersett VC Primary School's Whole-School Food Policy reflects the statutory *Requirements for School Food Regulations 2014* (which came into force in January 2015) and incorporates the most recent Department for Education guidance in *Standards for School Food in England* (updated 2023). It is informed by the vision of the Independent School Food Plan.

2. Arrangements for Monitoring and Review

- This policy will be reviewed in full by Matthew Parslow-Williams at least once every three years in accordance with the school's Year Planner.
- The lead person (named on this policy) shall inform the governing body of any changes to the model policy or to statutory or non-statutory guidance (including changes to the Standards for School Food in England).
- The governing body will receive regular reports on:
    - Compliance with the School Food Standards (food-based standards) for meals served – as set out in *Standards for School Food in England*. GOV.UK+1
    - Take-up of school lunches (including free school meals) and financial aspects of school food provision.
- Parents/carers are signposted to this policy when their child joins the school, so they are aware of the school's commitment to maintaining a healthy school food culture.
- This policy will be monitored and evaluated through:
    - Routine observation of lunchtime service and dining environment.
    - Pupil and parent/carer surveys (to gauge satisfaction, uptake, food waste, etc.).
    - Periodic audit of menus against the food-based standards checklist.

3. Introduction

"Good food provision in schools has been shown to lead not only to healthier children, but to improved attainment." At Hethersett VC Primary School we understand that a healthy balanced diet is key to every pupil fulfilling his or her full potential in life. We believe it is important to enjoy a varied and interesting diet while understanding that certain food groups should be eaten in moderation.

From academic year 2015 and onwards, under the Common Inspection Framework, schools are expected to show evidence for the extent to which they support their pupils' mental and physical wellbeing, including through healthy eating.

4. Vision

At Hethersett VC Primary School we endorse the School Food Plan vision to ensure that:

- Our children are served tasty and nutritious food at school, with no child going hungry.
- We take a Whole School Approach to food — strong collaboration between the head teacher, school cook and kitchen staff, pupils, staff, governors and parents/carers.

- Our children will know how to feed themselves well, and will enjoy cooking and growing with their families, both at school and at home; embedding a whole-school culture of health.

5. Objectives

The governors and staff aim to:

- Take a Whole School Approach to healthy eating to ensure that messages taught in the curriculum are echoed and reinforced by the type of food and drink provided in school.
- Ensure that all aspects of food and nutrition at the school promote the health and well-being of the whole school community.
- Encourage children to develop healthy dietary habits and attitudes – eating more fruit and vegetables, eating less sugar and fat, drinking more water. The Standards for School Food in England emphasise plenty of fruit and vegetables, starchy foods, protein sources, dairy or alternatives, and only a small amount of food and drink high in fat, sugar or salt. GOV.UK+1
- Enable pupils to make healthy food choices through provision of information about healthy foods and where food comes from, and through development of appropriate skills, including food preparation.
- Ensure that all adults in our school community are aware of this approach and work towards it.

6. Food in school

6.1 School meals

- Midday staff in the dining hall encourage an atmosphere that promotes healthy eating and develops social interaction between the children.
- The school contracts its lunchtime meals service to Norse Catering.
- All meals served adhere to the national food-based standards (the Standards for School Food in England) which ensure that food provided to pupils in school is nutritious and of high quality; to promote good nutritional health in all pupils; protect those who are nutritionally vulnerable; and promote good eating behaviour. GOV.UK
- The checklist for School Lunches is shown at Appendix 1 (or equivalent) and incorporates the food-based standards (starchy foods everyday; fruit & veg; protein; dairy; limited food high in fat/sugar/salt). GOV.UK
- Norse Catering operates its menu at Hethersett VC Primary School. The menu rotates over three weeks and a new menu is issued twice a year. At the start of each school day the children choose the lunch they would like from a choice of vegetarian or non-vegetarian hot meal, or a packed-lunch style option.
- School lunch menus are distributed to parents/carers and are available on the school's website; the week's menu is displayed for children by kitchen staff in the dining hall and in the classrooms.
- Children are encouraged to eat all or at least try most of the food provided. Lunchtime supervisors will assist any children who have concerns or difficulties during meal time (e.g.,

children who may have problems eating their lunch, spill or drop their lunch, cannot find a place to sit, do not eat their lunch or skip lunch).

- A school lunch must be provided for pupils where a meal is requested and either the pupil is eligible for free school lunches, or it would not be unreasonable for lunches to be provided.
- Special dietary requirements: Individual care plans are created for pupils with food allergies/intolerances. These document symptoms and adverse reactions, actions to be taken in an emergency, and emergency contact details. Parents/carers of children with special dietary needs must request a meeting with Norse Catering and agree a menu before their children partake of school meals. The school will provide a photograph to assist kitchen staff in identifying children with special dietary requirements.
- Research shows that a school lunch is nutritionally superior to most packed lunches and can lead to improved behaviour and attainment.
- Encouraging take-up of school meals through the school newsletters: parents/carers on low incomes will regularly be encouraged to register and take up their entitlement to free school meals for their children. Norse Catering are able to attend the annual open evening to offer food samples and promote school meals to parents/carers.

6.2 Packed lunches from home

- Although the governors encourage parents/carers to choose a school meal for their child, children are permitted to bring a packed lunch from home. However:
    - Sweets, chocolate, chewing gum and fizzy drinks are not permitted in school.
    - The Standards for School Food in England emphasise limiting foods and drinks that are high in sugar or fat. GOV.UK+1
- Ideas for a healthy lunchbox can be found at www.foodforthebrain.org/smart-kids/healthy-recipes-and-ideas.aspx